1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria

292 535 178 This dress was in regular use in every village in Metabhum until a year or two ago. At my last visit in March 1934, I was amazed to find that, almost as in obedience to some decree that had gone forth, the youth of the hills had abandoned the rib-dress, the shield and the gaily-coloured head-dress and skirt, sometimes wearing in lieu cheap bazaar singlets and a *dhoti*, retaining, however, the buttock-bells, the songs and the dance-steps. The older men all said that it was a spontaneous decision of the younger generation, decided upon because of the cost of buying the expensive yards of cloth needed for the dress; but this would not account for the abandonment of the shield, which they make themselves, and for which peacock tails are better than cloth streamers. Many have actually thrown away their cloth and shields. But some still think it necessary to hang them up round fresh graves, and I found that all the youths still know how to make them, and were willing to make them in camp. In 1932 a rumour went through all the tribes 203 of Jeypore and spread thence into Bastar that a god had descended 184 on one of the mountains of the Eastern Ghats and commanded all men to give up keeping black poultry and goats, wearing clothes or 178 using umbrellas or blankets with any black in them, and using beads or articles made of aluminium alloy. The message was rapidly bruited abroad, and everywhere villages had '*bohoranî*' ceremonies for purifying themselves from disease, and cast out black goats, cocks, hens, umbrellas, blankets, 'waskats', beads, aluminium ornaments and domestic utensils on the village boundary. Mohammedans began to make a good thing out of slaughtering the goats or exporting them. Strenuous propaganda by the State soon stopped this impoverishing rumour, and some of the villagers in the end recovered much of their property from the police, who had been ordered to take charge of it. At the time, the Bison-horn Marias seemed to have been only a little affected and the Hill Marias not at all; possibly this sudden abandonment of the most picturesque features of their dancing costume may be a late repercussion. Such sudden moves amongst Indian primitive tribes are not uncommon; the Gonds of Nagpur and adjacent districts a few years ago suddenly decided to give up keeping poultry and pigs as a measure of social uplift.

292 The *taghali* or bark cloak used by the Hill Maria for warmth or, primarily, protection against heavy dew and rain, has already been mentioned as deputizing occasionally for the sleeping-mat. Hutton speaks of the Angami Nagas making 'a large hat of leaves and basket work . . . as well as a rain-coat of plaited grass, the ends of which hang out loose, to

Rain-clothes

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

361 The population is comparatively small, and the land available for
[423] the shifting *penda* cultivation is very extensive. There is practically no individual property in *penda* land, and it is recognized only in permanent rice fields.

361 In comparison, the Bison-horn Maria country is thickly
241 populated; there is far more permanent rice cultivation; much old *penda* land has lost its forest growth, or is getting steadily
● 178 slower in recuperating it after each time when it is felled and burnt for *penda* cultivation; and each villager likes to have a large *bari*
621 or garden enclosure at the back of his house or in the immediate neighbourhood of the village where he can grow tobacco, maize, chillies, tomatoes and sesamum, and can pen his cattle for the sake of their manure. In consequence, economic considerations now operate in favour of the permanency of Bison-horn Maria villages and against their being shifted; as the pressure on the land has become greater the alternative sites (*padar*), to which in past generations a village was from time to time shifted, have been permanently occupied by hamlets (*para*) of that village, and the settlers in the hamlets have permanently occupied the adjacent *penda* sites once cultivated in rotation by the shifting village. Many big Bison-horn villages have six or seven hamlets, some of which are virtually separate villages, and are beginning to assert a separate identity by having their own headmen and sometimes their own village priests, though on formal occasions all will still gather together at the original *padar* of the village and its hamlets, and acknowledge there the authority of the headman and priest of the parent village. In the Abujhmar hills, moreover, each village is still inhabited almost entirely by members of one clan, and all the lands of the villages are regarded as the lands of the clan. But in the Bison-horn country, though each parish is still said to be the *bhum* (earth) of the clan which first settled there, yet there are generally in the village many houses of other clans and wife-clans, from whom the first settlers and their descendants have taken
[423] wives. Though they will still say that a certain village is the *bhum* of the clan that founded it, yet in consequence of the many representatives of other clans settled there now the village and its lands are not looked on as that clan's property in anything like the same degree as among the Hill Marias, nor in actual fact is the original clan so free to shift the village as it was before it allowed its wife-clans to share its village site and cultivable lands. Often, too, the headman is no longer a member of the settler clan. If,
[166] therefore, a Bison-horn village does shift in these days, the move is probably due to superstitious motives, or to epidemic or epizootic disease.

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

Where, as in Orcha and most of the surrounding villages of the Chhota Dongar *pargana*, *kotokal* menhirs are no longer erected, a cow or pig is nevertheless sacrificed in this way in the village on the night after the funeral at the heir's house, and portions of the flesh or the liver when cooked are placed under the cromlech at the base of the *kanal-gutta* post, or, if there is no cromlech, on the grave, while the tail, and sometimes also a lower leg, from hock to hoof, are fastened by a cord from an overhanging *saja* bough. The usual feast and dance then follow.

One reason for the abandonment of the custom of erecting menhirs may be that the clans which have abandoned it have in fairly recent times abandoned their traditional for their present clan-areas; for it was the rule that the menhir should always be erected in the village from which the dead man or his ancestors had originally come, not in the village at which he was living at the time of his death.

Treatment of abnormal deaths

A person who has killed himself, or who dies from cholera or small-pox, is not buried or cremated at the regular funeral ground, but in the forest at some distance from it. There had been no recent case in any village which I visited of a woman dying when pregnant or in child-birth, and no one could say what would be done in such a case. Persons killed by tigers or other wild animals must be burned, not buried, at the place where their remains are found, or to which they are brought for the inquest. They must never be brought into a village, for otherwise the dead man's *kanal* may bring the tiger there. The remains, if scattered, are collected and placed in a cloth brought from the dead man's house; but such bodies should be touched as little as possible. Logs are piled under the body where it lies and kindled, and anything found with the body or at the place where the tiger attacked the dead man is burnt with it; but no dancing dresses or other property are brought from his house to be burned with him, and no offerings of grain or *mahua* spirit are made at the grave. No *marma-hal* cairn and no *kotokal* menhir are set up for him; but there is nothing to prevent this being done for the victims of cholera or smallpox.

B. Bison-horn Marias

The true Bison-horn Marias, as distinguished from members of clans once Hill Maria in culture but now adopting Bison-horn customs, cremate all their dead except those who die from abnormal causes. When a man dies, his son-in-law is sent for, and on arrival climbs on to the roof of the house with a *dol* drum, which he beats

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32

Bison Horn Maria

for some time with a series of one long followed by two short beats to announce that a death has occurred in the house; he then climbs down, and continues this drumming on the ground until the relatives and friends of the dead man assemble, or until the body is taken out to be cremated. Sometimes they fire guns at intervals for the same purpose. Messengers are sent out to neighbouring villages to bid relatives to the funeral.

When all the men and women have assembled the body is taken out of the house and washed with a pot of water and anointed with a mixture of ground turmeric and oil. They then spread a cloth on a bier of bamboo wicker-work, lay the body on it, and spread a cloth over it. Each male relative who can afford it brings a cloth and similarly spreads it over the body. Four men then carry the bier on their shoulders to the cremation ground, followed by all the mourners, and men beating the dactylic funeral drum-beat. The pyre is made there, the body laid on it with head to the east and feet to the west, and covered over with fuel. Two men, generally two sons, or two sons-in-law, or a son and a son-in-law, then kindle the pyre at the head and the feet of the body respectively. As soon as the pyre is blazing fiercely the company leaves the cremation ground and returns to the dead man's house for food. The cremation ground is almost always on the side of the path or road opposite to the row of menhirs erected to commemorate the dead, which is known to the Bison-horn Marias as *wraskal*.

On the next day all go to the cremation ground to see whether the body has been completely reduced to ashes; if any portion remains unburnt, it is a sign that the death was due to the magic of some enemy. All condole with the members of the bereaved family and return to their houses.

On the next Saturday morning comes the erection of the *wraskal* menhir. There are *wraskal* with great numbers of menhirs almost everywhere in the Bison-horn country, and in most parts villagers continue to erect them for men, women and children whenever a death occurs.[1] On the Jagdalpur side, however, and around Paknar, though every village has its *wraskal*, new menhirs are seldom set up in these days, the reason given being always that the ceremony is too expensive. It is indeed expensive, for if properly done it involves the killing of at least one, and possibly two cows, a pig or two, and the provision of three or four *khandi* of grain—*kathi*, *wad*, *mung* and rice—and an adequate supply of *mahua* spirit and *landa*. But expense is not taken into account at weddings, where open house is kept for a thousand guests if need be. The real reason is that these Bison-horn Marias are in close contact with Hinduism with its veneration of the cow; and as they raise

[1] [see cat. 116, p. 426, — Analyst]

1: Grigson G-5 (1927-1934) 1949
AW32 Gond AW32
Hill Maria
Bison Horn Maria

538 not far distant from the Abujhmar. The Kuruk stories are almost certainly current also among the Bison-horn Maria. Two of the five specifically Bison-horn Maria tales, like one of the two Maria tales, are about monkeys. The first describes a helpful monkey which is treated with great ingratitude by human beings; in the second—as in Grigson's tale—a monkey marries a human girl and does not make a very great success of the union. In neither case, however, is there any reference to the dispareunia which the Baigas delight to emphasize in stories of the 'Beast Marriage' type. Two of the other tales, 'The Magic Eyes' and 'The Loving Ghost' are exceptionally charming and, while full of conventional folk-lore clichés, strike a note of some originality. In my *Myths of Middle India*, I give Bison-horn Maria legends of the creation of the world, the making of the sun and moon, the origin of fire and several stories of the Vagina Dentata cycle.

Page 280, *line* 34. In the country round Gidam and Barsur, 178 many clans that follow the megalithic tradition elsewhere have abandoned the practice of erecting menhirs, though the Barse, Kalmu and Kunjami clans continue it and erected twenty-six menhirs within the limits of the Gidam Revenue Circle in the years 1938-42. In the Jagdalpur tahsil, though the custom is less well maintained here than elsewhere, the Poyami, Vetti, Bekor, Kuharami, Marvi Padami and Muchaki at least continue to erect *uraskal* stones. Near Jagdalpur, however, and in the neighbourhood of Paknar, there has been some falling off of the practice.

Whatever may be the reason for the abandonment of megalithic customs—and I am rather sceptical about the influence of the Hindu taboo on beef-eating—certain clans have been affected by the warnings of their priests. In Vagriguda, for example, a village in the heart of an area where these customs flourish undisturbed, no menhirs are erected now because once when the village was overwhelmed by an epidemic, the Siraha declared that it was because the Village Mother was annoyed at the practice. The [187] Telami clan have abandoned the practice in the Dhurli area because once when they were quarrying a stone to serve as a menhir, a snake wriggled out of the crack, and this was taken as a sign of the divine displeasure. I believe that many culture changes in India are not due to the spread of civilization but are caused by incidents like these.

Page 281, *line* 24. The upper stone is called *danya-kal* and its 000 supports *odiyal*. In the Kutru zamindari, the Akri clan calls the upper stone *gariyakal*. The Chudala Marvi clan erects both *uraskal* and *danyakal* stones throughout the Konta tahsil and in ...h villages as Gogonda, Mankapal and Koya Vekur. So do the

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

THE COURSE OF MURIA LIFE: AGE

The stone erected by the Muria is an upright menhir called *uraskal* (from Gondi *urasna*—to bury, and *kal*—a stone) or *kotokal*. At Surewahi, near Antagarh, the villagers called the 240 menhirs of their memorial field *khamakal*. They stand from 2 to 8 feet high, and may be 1 foot to 4 feet broad and 6 to 10 inches thick. The Muria of eastern Kondagaon sometimes set up little menhirs not more than a foot tall. 769

The menhirs are erected for men, women and children, and usually stand in long rows by the roadside, near the village boundary, in the neighbourhood of the cemetery, or even in the village itself. Nearly always a small flat stone supported on two other stones is placed at the foot. This little cromlech is called the *kandi-garya*, or 'ghost-throne', and is used as an altar of sacrifice. Stones for men and women are usually put separately, and anyone who has died a suspicious death has his menhir apart from the others.

Hutton has referred to the megalithic culture of Bastar as 'now apparently rapidly decaying',[1] but the Jhoria Muria continue to erect menhirs everywhere and so do the other Muria of Narayanpur Tahsil and western Kondagaon. As we move east, however, and come more and more into the midst of Muria whose ancestors migrated south from the Central Provinces, the megalithic tradition tends to disappear, though it survives here and there, as we shall see, in curious and interesting forms. 769 178●

Why should a practice so widespread, so reasonable and so harmless to mankind have disappeared in the areas I have mentioned? The answer is not an easy one. Sometimes there is an actual difficulty in getting stones, and the Muria naturally do not care to transport great slabs of rock across great distances. The reason most commonly given is expense. This is probably the true reason, for the cost of erecting a menhir is considerable. A great feast has to be given; one or more cows must be sacrificed, and perhaps pigs and chickens as well; large quantities of liquor must be provided; and the carriers of the stone must be properly rewarded. Grigson, however, discussing this problem among the Maria, thinks that the question of expense is not the real reason, pointing out that many aboriginals spend a great deal of money on their marriages; he suggests that the true reason is contact with Hinduism 'with its veneration of the cow'.[2] This may be true of a few villages near Jagdalpur or Dantewara or of those Maria and Muria who have come under the strong influence of the Palace or the cult of Danteshwari. But I believe that in spite of ardent denials to officials and visitors, beef is still eaten from one end of Bastar to the other. In fact, there is evidence that the last few years have seen a revival of beef-eating. In any case, where a forked stick takes the place of a menhir, the fork is intended as a holder over which the tail of the cow should be hung.

It is more likely, certainly along the main roads and in the east, that there is a desire to imitate the Hindu custom of erecting elaborate tombs for the dead. Many of these may now be seen, with a small shelter over them, and a pot hanging above.

The break-up of the clan system, according to which in the old days the country was divided into definite clan areas, each with a central shrine for the clan god and one central place for the erection of all the menhirs of the clan, has been an important factor. The clans now are so scattered and their *illaqa* or territory is so divided up that many Muria have never been to their original *pen-runnur* or clan headquarters. The menhirs are no longer erected

[1] J. H. Hutton, Introduction to Grigson, op. cit., p. xv.
[2] Grigson, op. cit., p. xlii.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

769 at the spiritual capital of the clan-*bhum*, but are often placed in the village where the dead man used to live. I will return to this point immediately; it will ● 178 be sufficient to say now that the break-up of any form of organization is likely to cause a parallel decline in custom.

The association of the dead with the clan god is seen not only in the custom of erecting menhirs in the clan-*bhum*, and the use of an expression like Penhanal, but also in the Muria practice of taking the soul from the house to the Hanalkot which is always connected with one special clan. This was clearly illustrated at Phunder, where an earthen pot, full of rice, hangs above the Anga of the Maravi clan. When any member of the clan dies, the mourners take his soul here, sprinkle the blood of a sacrificed chicken above the clan-pot, and thus leave the soul of the dead with his clan ancestors. Once a year, at the first New Eating ceremony, the Gaita removes the pot and changes the rice in the name of the Departed.

XI. The Erection of a Menhir

769 The Muria regard it as necessary to bring the stone for their menhirs and the wood for the manufacture of the clan gods from special forests and hills. At Kokori the Naitami clan bring their stones from Chapadongri, the Maravi from Mahadeodongri. The Kalo clan of Mahurpat used to fetch their *kotokal* stones from Boga in Kanker State. One of their ancestors, they say, turned into stone (*kal*) on a hill near this place: they stole the stone and since then have been known as Kalo.

Since the Muria generally use small stones they seldom have to quarry them, but pick them off the ground. When people go to the forest for wood or to hunt they keep a look out for suitable surface stones.

The actual erection of the stone is done by the Jhoria Muria in largely Hill Maria fashion,[1] but here it is the chelik and motiari who escort the menhir to its place with their drums and dances. In the Paralkot area, when an old man dies, an *akomāma* relative dances with an axe over his shoulder in front of the stone and the boys and girls follow drumming and singing. In Phulpar they said that on this occasion, which here they called Kal Ursana or stone-burying, an *akomāma* relative beats the *hātur-dhol* or death-drum in front of the house of the deceased and chants a refrain: 'You are dead now; today we will devour your wealth with pleasure.'

I will give an example of the procedure followed at Kehalakot village. Birju Kaudo decided, as a result of dreams which troubled him, to erect a stone in memory of his parents. Stones for this clan have to be brought from a hill called Deodongri. He took with him the Gaita of the Hichami clan which stands in the *akomāma* relationship to the Kaudo clan, for it is the rule that the removal of the stone must be performed by a member of such a clan. The Gaita made a *chok* in front of the stone and offered liquor, pulse and rice, then dug it up. At first they could not get it out of the ground and the Gaita declared that the dead man was annoyed about something and they offered a black chicken to appease him. Once they had got the stone out of the ground they placed it on a specially prepared litter, covered it with fresh cloth and brought it to the *bhum* of the Kaudo clan, being careful not to take it through any village on the way.

As they brought it near, the dead man's sister and daughters stopped them, standing in a line across the path, and demanded rings. Birju gave them a

[1] See Grigson's description, *op. cit.*, pp. 270ff.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

CHAPTER ELEVEN

TWO TYPES OF GHOTUL

I

BEFORE proceeding further it is essential that we distinguish carefully between two different types of ghotul, for these are so sharply differentiated by rule and custom and the psychological conditions of each are so distinct that until this is done we can get no clear picture of the intimate relations between chelik and motiari.

The fundamental principle of the first type of dormitory, which is sometimes called the *jodidār*[1] or 'yoking' ghotul, is that of fidelity to a single partner during the whole of the pre-marital period. Each chelik is paired off with a motiari; he is formally 'married' to her; she may even take the feminine form of his title as her own. Divorce is allowed, though infidelity is punished.

In the second type of ghotul, which is probably a later development of the classic model, any kind of lasting attachment between chelik and motiari is forbidden. No one can say that such and such a motiari is *his* girl; if anyone sleeps with a particular girl for more than three days at a time, he is punished.

In all other matters, whether of discipline, routine, social duty or recreation, there is no difference between the two types of ghotul. We must, however, carefully distinguish them for their sexual customs and psychological conditions.

The *jodidār* ghotul is, I think, the original form of the Muria dormitory. In the first place, it is most widely distributed in the more primitive parganas—the Chota Dongar, Dugal and Karangal—and in the neighbourhood of the Abujhmar Mountains. It has retained its place most successfully among the Jhoria, who are undoubtedly the oldest of the Muria groups. Secondly, the Muria themselves describe the other type of ghotul as a modern improvement intended to eliminate scandals and the danger of pregnancy. The change from one type to the other is still going on. At Karangaon, which was formerly

FIG. 57. Carving on the pillars of the ghotul at Almer

[1] A *jodi* or *jori* is the word used for a life-long friend, yoke-fellow or husband and wife. A *jodi* is something definitely more than a temporary lover. It is the person yoked to whom one will pull the heavy plough of life. See V. Elwin and S. Hivale, *Folk-Songs of the Maikal Hills* (Bombay, 1944), pp. 24ff.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

a *jodidār* ghotul, a pregnancy scandal caused the chelik and motiari to adopt the other rule of partnership. Twenty years ago, Masora was a *jodidār* ghotul; today its members insist on change. I believe that originally all over the ghotul area the dormitories were of the older type; then in order to avoid the scandals and elopements that naturally arose from such intense and lasting attachments, and as a result of the belief that conception was less likely when the cycle of coitus was frequently broken, the rules were changed.

The ghotul, therefore, gives no support to those who believe in what Westermarck called the 'hypothesis of primitive promiscuity'. Promiscuity is the last thing permitted in the *jodidār* ghotul. It might even be argued that it is the result of culture-contact, for the ghotul in the neighbourhood of towns and schools, or along the roads, are generally of the modern, promiscuous, type.

This gradual change from one tradition to another probably accounts for the very haphazard distribution of the two types at the present time. The old tradition persists in the neighbourhood of the Abujhmar and among the Jhoria; elsewhere there is no rule. Here and there throughout the whole area, *jodidār* ghotul survive in the midst of dormitories which, as the result of scandal or example, have changed their rules. In the Kongur Pargana, for example, More Berma, Kanhargaon and Gorma are ghotul of the old type surrounded by others, as are Chimri and Morenga in the Bangoli Pargana. At the present time, the newer type of ghotul seems to be in the majority; out of the 2000 married men examined, 720 had grown up in *jodidār* dormitories, and 1280 in the others, while out of 347 dormitories of which I have information on this point 269 have adopted the new rules, 78 retaining the older customs.

II

In the *jodidār* ghotul, the pairing-off of chelik and motiari in a more or less permanent relationship, only to be dissolved by the marriage or death of one partner, is taken very seriously. In most villages there is a custom of the ghotul marriage, which is celebrated after the children have attained ghotul maturity and received their titles. In Metawand the chelik gave me a detailed description of the ceremony.

The members of the ghotul are allotted their various parts in the marriage. First of all, the boy's 'parents' go to the girl's 'parents' for the betrothal ceremony, carrying two leaf-pipes to represent bottles of liquor. The girl's parents say—in strict accordance with tradition—'Why have you come, samdhi?' 'O there's nothing special, we were going this way and looked in for a few moments.' 'No, no, there must be some reason.' 'Well, we did hear that a flower had blossomed in your house; we would pick it to adorn our hair.' 'Ah, how truly they say that a dog is fed many years only to be taken by a panther in the end, and a daughter is cherished only to be carried off by the samdhi.' There follows the usual dispute about the bride-price and, when that is agreed, the two parties sit together and smoke.

The following day comes the 'marriage'. Ashes are used instead of haldi. A little booth is made in the ghotul court. The marriage ritual is briefly recapitulated. Water is poured from the roof over the two children. Eager hands catch them and shut them up in an inner room. The bride screams, 'Open the door, let me out'. The others, shouting with laughter, at last let them go. That night the two sleep together, and will probably continue to do so until one of them is married.

4: Fürer-Haimendorf E-5 (1942-1945) 1948
AW32 Gond AW32

Scheme under which instruction in reading and writing Gondi and later Marathi and Urdu was to be provided for both children and adults. On my return to Marlavai we started work on a small scale with a school where adult Gonds were to be trained as teachers and village-officers. The work on this Scheme kept us in Marlavai until the end of January 1944, and it was there that most of the chapters contained in Book I were written. After an absence of five months in Assam, we returned in the rains for a short period and this gave me the opportunity of checking my Gondi texts with the help of the Headmaster of the Marlavai Training Centre Mr. S. B. Jogalkar and the Gond teachers, some of whom had meanwhile opened schools in their own villages.[1]

The division of the present work into two books was necessitated by its bulk and by the fact that a sudden opportunity for two expeditions into one of the least known tribal areas of the North-East Frontier prevented us from concentrating on the completion of the second part.

In the presentation of facts we have departed from the usual order of a straight monograph; instead of grouping them under such headings as material culture, agriculture, or religion, we have attempted an arrangement which, we hope, will give a better idea of Gond life as an organic entity. After the introductory chapters, which describe the physical and cultural environment, we have set a section outlining the mythical background of Gond culture and the cult of the clan-deities; for in this cult and the sacred myths lies the mainspring of the social order. Then follows a section describing the economic and ritual activities of a village community throughout the cycle of the year, and the three chapters of this section contain also most of the information on agriculture, the basis of Gond economics. Book II will open with an account of the phases of life, from childhood to death, and this will set the stage for a general discussion of the social organization and the principles of Gond religion, all details of ritual having been described already in their proper setting. The old feudal system looms still in the background of the social order, and I am attempting a reconstruction based on the existing remnants and local traditions contained mainly in the stories and songs of Pardhans. Read together with Wills' history of the Gond States of the Central Provinces this will perhaps give a certain idea of political and social life prevailing in Gondwana throughout the greater part of mediæval times.

The final chapters of the book will be concerned with the developments of the last fifty years, when increased contact with other populations broke up the Gonds' feudal organization and land-hungry immigrants drove many families from the lands where they had lived since the times of their ancestors. It is a dismal tale of the decline of a once proud and happy people, the loss of economic freedom, and the birth

1 Cf. my article 'Aboriginal Education in Hyderabad.' *The Indian Journal of Social Work*, Vol. V., 1944.

4: Fürer-Haimendorf E-5 (1942-1945) 1948
AW32 Gond AW32

of a timid and resigned outlook in place of the manly spirit of old. Finally I propose to discuss the results of the more liberal policy towards the aboriginals which H.E.H. the Nizam's Government has pursued since 1944, and to outline the principles and the first stages of the Gond Education Scheme, which is designed to help the Gonds in the struggle for existence and to restore to them self-respect and pride in their own ancient culture.

In an account of a culture as rich and complex as that of the Raj Gonds the anthropologist must needs concentrate on certain aspects, and in this book I have given first place to the Gonds' mythology and their complex ritual, sanctioned and sustained in almost every phase by mythical precedents. This part of Gond culture is rapidly disintegrating and its study, still possible in the hills of Utnur and Asifabad Taluqs, would come too late in the more open parts of the District. Problems of psychology and the more intimate matters of the individual's life, on the other hand, are only fleetingly touched upon, but I believe that changes in this sphere are not as rapid and the time left for their study is consequently far less limited.

Although this book is not a treatise on linguistics, Gondi texts of some length have found a place in many chapters. I noted them when collecting my material and as they are the first recorded specimens of the pecular Gondi spoken in Adilabad, I do not feel justified in withholding them from the student of Indian languages. All have been checked and rechecked with several informants, but this is no guarantee of absolute accuracy, for Gonds, like the speakers of most unwritten languages, are often careless about rules of grammar and not very sensitive to slight slips in a text read out to them. The recording, moreover, is not in accordance with the exigent demands of modern phonetics, which only the trained linguist can fulfil. Consonants are used with their values in English, and vowels with their values in Italian, long and short signs being added only where confusion might otherwise arise between two words of similar sound. Diacritical signs have been used only in the consonants ṭ, ṛ and ḥ. While the dental t, rendered by the Nagri character त , is transcribed by simple t, the cerebral t rendered in Nagri by ट, is transcribed by ṭ. Similarly the soft r, र in Nagri, is transcribed r, and the hard r, ड़ in Nagri, as ṛ. The letter ḥ stands for a sound closely resembling the German ch in Bach (pronounced like the composer). This sound occurs mainly in words of Marathi origin, and in such words most Gonds not familiar with Marathi pronounce it not as sh, but h; examples are *goḥti* (word, speech) and *paḥti* (favour) pronounced in pure Marathi as *goshti* and *pashti*; but I have transcribed these and similar words as pronounced by the Gonds in the hills.

Following the spelling of the Linguistic Survey and Trench's Grammar, I have used *w* for all *v*-sounds, except in proper names occurring in the English text, and in words borrowed from Hindi in which *v* is